

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please delete claims 1-6, amend claims 7 and 9 and add new claims 21-31 as follows.

A1
~~7 (Amended). A method for preventing iron deficiency anemia in a mammal comprising the steps of:~~

- ~~a) removing a composition comprising micro-encapsulated iron granules and a lipid-based excipient from packaging material;~~
- ~~b) [a)] adding a therapeutically effective amount of said composition [comprising micro-encapsulated iron granules and a lipid-based excipient] to a food; and~~
- ~~c) [b)] administering the food to said mammal.~~

A2
~~9 (Amended). A method as defined in claim 7, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about [10-25]10-17 mg of elemental iron.~~

A3
~~21 (New). An article of manufacture as defined in claim 12, wherein the iron granules are no more than about 850 microns in diameter.~~

~~22 (New). An article of manufacture as defined in claim 12, wherein the iron granules are encapsulated with a coating, said coating being prepared from a compound selected from the~~

group consisting of monoglycerides, diglycerides, ethyl cellulose, hydrogenated soy bean oil and mixtures thereof.

23 (New). A method for preventing iron deficiency anemia in a mammal comprising the steps of:

- A3*
Cont
- a) removing a composition comprising micro-encapsulated iron granules and a lipid-based excipient from packaging material;
 - b) at the time of consumption adding a therapeutically effective amount of said composition to a food; and
 - c) administering the food to said mammal.

24 (New). A method as defined in claim 23, wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of a semi-solid or pureed food and a milk-based food product.

25 (New). A method as defined in claim 23, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about 40-80 mg of elemental iron.

26 (New). A method as defined in claim 23, wherein the composition additionally comprises ascorbic acid.

27 (New). A method as defined in claim 23, wherein the excipient is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.

28 (New). An article of manufacture as defined in claim 12, where the label additionally indicates that said composition is to be added to a semi-solid food, pureed food or liquid food.

29 (New). A method as defined in claim 7, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about 40-80 mg of elemental iron.

30 (New). An article of manufacture as defined in claim 12, wherein said therapeutically effective amount of micro-encapsulated iron is in the range of about 40-80 mg.

31 (New). Use of an article of manufacture as defined in any of claims 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 28 and 30 to prevent iron deficiency anemia.